

THE Nexus

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State Librarian Ann Joslin

Notes from ICfL

Share Your Thoughts about ICfL's Overview Video

The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) recently put together an overview of the State of the State's Libraries. The video highlights some of the valuable work Idaho libraries are doing and offers a statewide perspective on the important role of libraries. Commission staff encourages library staff, public library trustees, and library directors to view this 17-minute video and provide feedback so we can see if you find video presentations to be a useful tool. Let us know what you think by completing a very brief online evaluation after viewing.

- Access the video at libraries.idaho.gov/files/presentations/StLbrJFAC2015/index.html

- Access the brief evaluation at www.surveymonkey.com/r/icflvideo.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts about the Overview and what other topics you might want covered in the future.

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Microsoft IT Academy Pilot

Idaho public libraries have the opportunity to offer Microsoft IT Academy coursework to help patrons become proficient in Office 2010 or 2013 programs such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. The free, self-paced online courses provide patrons with the knowledge to test for specialist, expert, and master certifications in these and other Microsoft programs.

Libraries as testing site: In addition to offering the free coursework, libraries can serve as a Certiport Testing Center where patrons can test for their certifications.

When libraries sign up for the Microsoft IT Academy to become Certiport test centers they will receive 30 free exam vouchers for staff, but patrons can expect to pay a fee of \$80-100 to take the tests.

Learning Site: If a library chooses to offer only the free coursework, and not certification testing, patrons can still access a list of Certiport Testing Center sites for the general public on the Idaho State Department of Education (SDE) Microsoft IT Academy webpage at www.sde.idaho.gov/site/digitalLearning/MSFT-IT.htm.

Public libraries can still register for the Microsoft IT Academy program. To do so, they can fill out the form at <http://goo.gl/forms/KuGW8Cr064>. Libraries that opted in this summer but haven't registered need to fill out this form if they are still interested.

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Idaho Commission for Libraries

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<http://libraries.idaho.gov>

Mission:

The Idaho Commission for Libraries assists libraries to build the capacity to better serve their clientele.

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Funding for Microsoft IT Academy programs was provided this year by the Idaho Legislature as part of its effort to improve student training for in-demand job skills. SDE provides overall administration of the program.

- Find more information about the program at the SDE website at www.sde.idaho.gov/site/digitalLearning/MSFT-IT.htm. Click on the Libraries tab.

- Additional details about the coursework are available at the Microsoft website at www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/it-academy.

Summer Summit

Thirty-eight Idaho school library staff members convened in the Wood River Valley for two days to learn about some new ways to serve their students and teacher colleagues, integrate free tech tools into their library programs, experiment with makerspaces, and support Idaho Core Standards from the library. District Media Coordinators met the day before to focus on their roles in their districts and in the state, learn about new interschool and inter-district mentoring possibilities, experiment with makerspaces and gather STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) ideas for their schools.

Public Library Directors' Summit

ICfL will host a Public Library Directors' Summit on January 27 and 28, 2016 at the Grove Hotel in Boise, Idaho. This will be an opportunity for public library directors to meet with other directors from around the state, network, identify policy issues that impact public libraries, and lay the groundwork for communicating with each other. Find more information at libraries.idaho.gov/pldirectors or register [here](#).

Registration Deadline is September 15, 2015

Summer Reading

Through a partnership with Idaho State Parks and Recreation, ICfL offered free state park passes to Idaho public libraries that hosted summer reading programs. The Youth Explorer Passes waived the entry fee for one vehicle for one day to any Idaho state park. Over 100 libraries requested more than 32,000 passes to distribute when children signed up for summer reading, to give out as prizes for summer reading, and to take to outreach events.

Let's Talk About It

Since 1985, Let's Talk About It (LTAI) has been bringing adult reading discussion groups together with humanities scholars in Idaho's public libraries to discuss fine literature. These readings and discussions explore American values, history, culture, aging, classics, and more. See more about LTAI and what this year's participating libraries chose for themes at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/landing/lets-talk-about-it>.

Literacy in the Park

Literacy in the Park is a summer learning initiative ICfL introduced in 2013 that offers children storytime, activities, and books to borrow from traveling lending libraries. Piggybacking on the Idaho Foodbank's Picnic in the Park initiative and the Idaho State

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Department of Education's Summer Food Service Program, ICfL and participating libraries staged Literacy in the Park events weekly at numerous summer-feeding locations throughout the Treasure Valley. Karen Miller, a middle school history teacher for the West Ada School District who is working on a masters degree in Literacy from Boise State University, has been with ICfL from the start. This summer she was out in the parks every day, no matter how hot it was. Families looked forward to Literacy in the Park and listening to her stories. On this summer's last day, Miller engaged them with her reading of B.J. Novak's *The Book With No Pictures*. The kids were fully engrossed and laughed at all the weird noises she was obliged to make in order to read the book. The kids were thrilled to be able to borrow books all summer. One 10-year-old said, unprompted, "Thank you for giving us this opportunity to read and exercise our imaginations!"



**Karen Miller reading to
Literacy in the Park attendees**

Summer Slide Pilot Project

Desert Sage Elementary School was one of five schools participating in ICfL's Summer Slide Pilot Project this summer. School librarian, Karen Stahlecker, talked about how much the program means for their library and the kids. They had 150 kids participating, up 50 from last year. Students in K-2 received eight books, donated by ICfL, in May to read, trade for new books in the library throughout the summer, and then return in the fall. This year the school libraries added STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) activities and Desert Sage distributed the summer program calendar ahead of time during the school's spring book fair and other events.



**Kids reading at Desert Sage Elementary
during Summer Slide program**

Library News From Around the State

Find out what is happening in Idaho libraries. Do you have news about your library that you'd like to share in an upcoming Nexus e-newsletter? Please let me know at teresa.lipus@libraries.idaho.gov.

Armoral Tuttle Public Library, New Plymouth, welcomed new director Rosette Treat in August.

DeMary Memorial Library, Rupert, welcomed new director Shambry Emero in July.

Emmett Public Library: Emmett was recently recognized by the Association of Idaho Cities with the "City Achievement Capitol Improvement Award" for the expansion of the Emmett Public Library. The Awards recognize the work of cities around Idaho that implement pioneering approaches to improve quality of life, address community challenges, and enhance service delivery in cost-effective ways. The library added an additional wing on the north side of the existing building. The Dale Cooper Memorial Wing houses a nonfiction section, a research and study area, and a small conference room and office. Director Alyce Kelley said the expansion is "a vested partnership-grassroots project funded completely with donations, grants, and in-kind efforts, giving a vital community facility an update that will allow growth for a prospering city, enriching the lives of its people for generations to come."

Nampa Public Library welcomed new director Chris Cooper in July. Read more in the [Idaho Press Tribune](#).

Prairie District Library welcomed new director Lexah Thompson in July.



Banned Books Week: September 27–October 3, 2015

Banned Books Week celebrates the freedom to read and highlights the value of free and open access to information.

- Check out [frequently challenged books](#) to explore the issues around book challenges and book banning.
- For more information on Banned Books Week see [Ideas and Resources](#) and the new [Banned Books Week site](#).



SPLAT Summer Adventure 2015

by Shirley Biladeau, continuing education consultant



The SPLAT team in eastern Idaho

The 2015 SPLAT Summer Adventure is in the history books! “What is a SPLAT Summer Adventure?” you might be asking yourself.

SPLAT (Special Projects Library Action Team) was created in 2007 as one of the outcomes of the 2020 Futures Conference held in 2005. Members, who volunteer from the Idaho library community to serve at least a three-year term, are “to act in the ‘crows nest’ capacity, searching for innovation, proposing and leading experiments and pilot projects, discovering new opportunities.”

About three years ago, the SPLAT group created the Gizmo Garage, which at the time was a collection of tablets, e-readers, and other mobile devices to share with libraries across the state. This year the Gizmo Garage transitioned into the Idea Lab. We weeded some of the mobile devices (which we offered to libraries around the state) and then added things like virtual 3-D viewing device, a scanner, and a printer along with Makey-Makey, Circuit Blocks, and Sphero. In addition there are low tech options such as Keva Planks for creation and innovation.

The SPLAT Team decided that in order to get technology into the hands of staff in libraries throughout the state, it would be best to do a one-day outreach program. So for the past three years, a geographic area has been selected, libraries have been asked if they would like a "SPLAT Visit" and voilà!, the “Summer Adventure” was born. SPLAT members gather for one day in a specific area of Idaho and “SPLAT” libraries, working with both staff and patrons to answer questions about technology, set up learning centers and facilitate exploration, and move on to other areas of conversation concerning library operations. The peer-to-peer approach has been wildly successful.

Outcomes have included

- Enhanced comfort levels with technology for staff, library boards, and patrons.
- Energized staff and patrons in regard to library programming, especially for technology.
- Faces connected to SPLAT team and mentors provided for future inquiries.
- Technology brought to small, rural libraries that might not otherwise have the experience or expertise.

This year’s adventure focused on eastern Idaho. In one day, 10 SPLAT members and three drivers touched 15 libraries and over 200 people. Participants observed the functioning (or challenges) of 3-D printers, the Sphero robot, learned about electronic circuitry through Circuit Blocks and Makey-Makey, created and innovated with Keva Planks, performed 3-D body scanning, and observed virtual reality through roller coaster rides and museum visits. One six-year-old’s comment about her virtual museum visit, in her most serious, grown-up voice was “Oh My! This is amazing! Oh My! This is amazing!”

For SPLAT members, this outreach raises the awareness of the diversity of Idaho's libraries, their communities, and their challenges, while enhancing leadership skills and strengthening the Idaho library community by extending connections.

A big thank you to all the SPLAT members who participated, to their library directors who let them escape their regular duties for a few days, to the libraries visited for their warm hospitality, and to the drivers who made sure we got to and from the events.

The Idea Lab is now available for checkout to any Idaho publicly-funded library (school, academic, public).

Ask your local SPLAT person for more information: <http://splat.lili.org/2013-splat-members/>.

Check out the list of items now available in the Idea Lab: <http://splat.lili.org/splat-resources/whats-in-the-idea-labs/>.



Increasing Library Broadband through 4G

Idaho Commission for Libraries' broadband access survey documented that many Idaho public libraries, both small and large, don't have adequate, affordable, or reliable broadband. Their challenges are likely to increase as more online resources are offered (such as Microsoft IT academy) and as more people bring their own devices to use the library's Wi-Fi. Earlier this summer, in the interest of finding solutions, two public libraries participated in a pilot project to test 4G as an affordable and adequate broadband option. Ada Community Library's Lake Hazel Branch and Community Library Network's Athol Branch worked with Cradlepoint, a Boise-based company, to enhance their wireless capabilities.



Cradlepoint, a provider of cloud-managed 4G networking solutions, offers a router, plus a modem that functions with a chip from the wireless carrier and works off the signal from a cell tower. Using the cell tower signal provides additional broadband for primary service or for a backup/redundancy system. Cradlepoint supplies the hardware, and the wireless carrier provides the SIM card and data plan. If libraries request it, Cradlepoint can provide "one stop shopping" and facilitate the contract with the wireless carrier.

For the pilot, Ada Community Library moved their wireless devices to 4G broadband. This worked fairly well, but didn't provide quite enough capacity in one router for their wireless demand so the library is now pursuing a 100MB offer from a different carrier. Ada Community recently moved the pilot equipment from their Lake Hazel branch to their Hidden Springs Branch to test it there, as they discovered wireless was running very slowly on their current connection. The library found the project easy to implement and inexpensive. They had a positive experience with Cradlepoint and would recommend the company to others.

Community Library Network initially had trouble getting filtering to work through the 4G service, but eventually that was resolved and their pilot was successful. The result was that they purchased the Cradlepoint hardware and services for four locations: Athol, Harrison, Spirit Lake, and Rathdrum.

Idaho Digital Learning Academy also had success with Cradlepoint's 4G service, and is using it for backup/redundancy.

To find out more about the project from the pilot libraries, you can contact Dylan Baker, IT Division Coordinator at Ada Community Library, or Mark Foster, IT Coordinator at Community Library Network. Both would be happy to answer questions from other libraries about the 4G project.

To talk to someone at Cradlepoint about the possibility of increasing your library's broadband through 4G, contact Mark Messer, State and Higher Education-West Account Manager, at mmesser@cradlepoint.com or 208.908.4616.

If you try 4G broadband, Idaho Commission for Libraries would be interested in hearing about your experience

Is Your Broadband Sufficient?

You might think that your broadband is completely sufficient for your library's needs, but:

- Can you watch a YouTube video without multiple pauses for buffering?
- Can you download files quickly and smoothly?
- When you are ordering books online, does it ever time out before you can complete the transaction?
- Do patrons ever complain about the library's slow Internet speed?
- Can your customers do their online banking and upload photos, resumes or files without error messages or timing out?
- Do things slow down noticeably between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.?

If you have answered yes to one or more of the questions above, you might need to increase your library's broadband.



Recent Changes at LiLI.org By Gina Persichini, technology & access services consultant



LiLI.org has seen a lot of changes this year. Here is a recap of new content, and information about what you might see for the LiLI Portal in the near future:

Content and Database Changes During 2015

- **American Decades Primary Sources** – This new title to the Gale Virtual Reference Library collection covers the first decade of the twenty-first century from monumental events and groundbreaking individuals to the details of Americans' daily lives.
- **Middle East Conflict** – A new title to the Gale Virtual Reference Library collection, it provides a comprehensive and objective overview of the people, events, and documents that are key to understanding the complex relationship of the countries and cultures of the Middle East.
- **Explora Primary** – Ebsco's new interface for students in primary grades. Explora Primary replaces the Searchasaurus and Kid Search interfaces used in the past. This new interface provides a simple search for articles, essays, and primary source materials to support student learning and research. New topic overviews provide a great starting point for information seeking.
- **Explora Secondary** – Ebsco's new interface for students in secondary grades. Explora Secondary replaces Kid Search and Student Research Center interfaces used previously. The new mobile-friendly design provides simple search, topic overviews, and relevant results to support classroom learning.
- **Explora Public** – In the LiLI Portal, Explora Public is your one-stop shop interface for articles, primary sources, and a variety of resources to meet the information needs of library users. Explora Public is linked to most of the LiLI databases acquired through Ebsco. For those users that remember the front-page search on LiLI.org from the past, Explora Public is the most similar in terms of scope of coverage for a single search.
- **Chilton Library** – Auto repair content at LiLI.org is now provided through Chilton Library. This reference tool includes information on vehicles dating back to the 1940s. Find repair diagrams, maintenance schedules and more for your automotive reference needs in this new addition to LiLI.org.

What's Next for LiLI.org?

- With new additions to the LiLI Portal, ICfL staff will be reviewing the organization of databases in each of the "User Groups" and "Topics" on the site with the intent to simplify categories with the most popular tools listed to avoid overwhelming users with long lists.
- More tutorials will be added to the LiLI Tutorials page at <http://guides.lili.org/lilitutorials>.
- Information about adding MARC records for LiLI resources will be added to the LiLI Databases website at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/lili-databases>.
- Branding instructions for properly attributing the "funded by LiLI" information to libraries' websites will be updated with more options and flexibility.

We look forward to improving the LiLI.org and LiLI Database experience for all Idaho users.

Upcoming ILA Annual Conference



The Idaho Library Association (ILA) 2015 Annual Conference, "Libraries Leading the Way," will be held in Boise, at Boise State University. There are three preconference choices on September 30; over 40 conference sessions October 1–2; a variety of opportunities to network with hundreds of your peers and colleagues; exhibits from companies highlighting products and services geared to the library community; an Awards Banquet to honor your colleagues for their commitment to libraries; Speaker Nate Hill, the Executive Director of the Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO); and a keynote address by Phil Eastman II from Leadership Advisors Group.

Early Bird registration ends September 10. Regular registration ends October 2.

Register at idaholibraries.org/conferences/ila-annual-conference/.



Calls for Nominations: Libraries and Librarians

Best Small Library in America Nomination—public libraries

Postmark deadline: September 9, 2015

If your public library demonstrates outstanding service to a population of 25,000 or less, Library Journal and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation want to hear from you. The winning library will receive a \$20,000 cash award, a feature story in the February 2016 Library Journal, and conference costs for two library representatives to attend the Public Library Association Biannual Conference in 2016 and a gala reception. Two finalist libraries will receive a \$10,000 cash award as well as conference costs for two library representatives.

More information: <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/awards/best-small-library-in-america-award-nomination-guidelines/>



2015 I Love My Librarian Award—public, school, or academic librarians

Nomination deadline: September 28, 2015

Ten librarians will receive a \$5,000 cash award, a plaque, and a travel stipend to attend the awards ceremony and reception in New York City, hosted by Carnegie Corporation of New York. Each nominee must be a librarian with a master's degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association in library and information studies or a master's degree with a specialty in school library media from an educational unit accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. Nominees must be currently working in the United States in a public library, a library at an accredited two- or four-year college or university, or at an accredited K-12 school.

More information: <http://ilovelibraries.org/lovemylibrarian>

2016 National Medal for Museum and Library Service—all library types

Nomination forms due: October 1, 2015

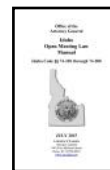
The Institute of Museum and Library Services is accepting nominations for the 2016 National Medal for Museum and Library Service award, which recognizes libraries and museums that make significant and exceptional contributions in service to their communities. Winners are honored at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. and host a two-day visit from StoryCorps to record community member stories. All types of nonprofit libraries and library organizations, including academic, school, and special libraries, archives, library associations, and library consortia, are eligible to receive this honor. Anyone may nominate a library for this honor, and institutions may self-nominate.

More information: www.ims.gov/applicants/detail.aspx?GrantId=13

Publications Available from Office of Attorney General

The Office of the Attorney General recently published several manuals of interest to public libraries:

- *Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual* at www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/legalManuals/OpenMeeting.pdf:
The Idaho Open Meeting Law was designed to ensure transparency of the legislative and administrative processes within state and local governments. It codifies a simple, but fundamental, Idaho value that “the public’s business ought to be done in public.”
- *Idaho Ethics in Government Manual* at www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/legalManuals/EthicsInGovernment.pdf:
This manual includes Idaho’s three primary statutes governing ethics in government: the Bribery and Corrupt Influence Act; the Prohibition Against Contracts with Officers Act; and the Ethics in Government Act.
- *Idaho Public Records Law Manual* at www.ag.idaho.gov/publications/legalManuals/PublicRecordsLaw.pdf:
In 2015, the Legislature re-codified the public records law to provide one place for citizens to find laws relating to government transparency. Those changes are incorporated in this new edition of the *Idaho Public Records Law Manual*.



To request a hardcopy of these publications, go to the Office of the Attorney General’s online contact form at www.ag.idaho.gov/onlineForms/contactAG.htm.



Is Your Library's Web Presence Making the Grade?

By Gina Persichini, technology & access services consultant

"Google had always been around...."

"Email is formal communication..."

"WiFi is an expectation..."

These are just a few of the ideas captured in the most recent [Mindset List](#) for the class of 2019 at Beloit College. While many of our library users have been our users for a long time, we now have generations of users with different expectations for how they interact with businesses, government, and even libraries.

This is why the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) created the eBranch in a Box program in 2006 and established Web Presence as a requirement for public libraries to receive LSTA grant funds. Web Presence is that important. Even if a library isn't applying for funds directly, a qualifying web presence is a good measure for minimum service as a library considers communication of services to the community. The website is how many of our users get information about what services are available and seek content through the library. The open hours aren't enough, our users expect 24/7 access to library services. In a world where we can pay parking tickets online at any time of the day or night, we also expect to be able to place a hold on a book or download an article through our most important information provider – the library.

What is Web Presence?

ICfL defines web presence as a website that provides current information about, or access to, its services. Specifically, the following criteria are necessary:

- Library name
- Library address, including mailing address if different from the physical address
- Library phone number
- Email address or online contact to reach library staff
- Hours of operation
- Names of library board members
- Link to the online catalog if one is available
- Link to the LiLI Portal (www.lili.org) or individual databases properly branded or noting "funded by LiLI"
- Up-to-date description of library services

Idaho Libraries' Web Presence

After a look at Idaho's public library websites, only 63 of the 103 public library jurisdictions in Idaho have a website that meets the definition above. The good news is that many of the websites that do not meet the eligibility criteria listed above need only minor tweaks to get to 100 percent.

Five Most Commonly Missed Criteria

The following five items are most often missing from Idaho's public library websites:

- **Email address or online contact:** In a world where online communication is widespread, having a way for users to reach the library using email or an online form is necessary. Libraries without locally provided email services may want to utilize a service like Google's Gmail to establish a free email

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address for the library. Include the email address in the same place you would the library's phone number and address on the website for easy access to your users.

- **Names of library board members:** Board members are the public officials "legally responsible for overseeing the efficient and effective operation of the public library." ([*Idaho Trustee Manual*](#), p. 3) As public officials, the residents in their service area – the public library's service area population – need to know who is representing their needs in respect to the public library. Most libraries include a link with information "about" the library or "about us" where primary contacts for the library are listed. This is an excellent place within the library website to list the board members. It's not just about the users being able to identify their library leaders. It's also about acknowledging the individuals who volunteer their time in the important capacity of leading the public library.
- **Link to the online catalog:** For libraries without an online catalog, this item in the web presence definition is not an issue. For the rest, though, linking to the online catalog can be tricky. In most cases the catalog vendor can provide you with the proper web address, or URL, to link to the catalog. Today's best library websites, though, include an embedded search right on the main page of the website for easier access by users. If your catalog vendor is unable to help you out, contact ICfL's Technology & Access Services Consultant [Gina Persichini](#). She will help uncover the mystery to getting that link in place for you.
- **Link to LILI Portal or individual databases with proper branding:** ICfL recognizes that branding, while necessary for creating loyal users and product recognition, is hard to achieve with a one-size-fits-all method. For that reason, revised branding options are being developed and a future news article from ICfL will outline a more flexible linking and branding options for Idaho libraries.
- **Description of current library services:** Among the most important information to share on your library's website is what you do. Do you customers know you have ebooks? Online databases to help with homework? Story times? Maker spaces? How does a visitor to your website know that today's library is more than checking out books? The description of your services is what will draw the website visitor to the physical door of the library. This is the best place to highlight new additions to the collection, ongoing programs, and a schedule of events. The trick to this item is keeping it current, so keep in mind how often you are able to update the library website when you consider the wording of your current library services.

Why use limited staff time on web presence?

There is no doubt that library staff are stretched thin with too many tasks and not enough time to get it all done. Most of the content for the web presence criteria is one-time content. It doesn't change. An investment to get it done now will pay off with library users later on.

But it's so hard, can't you make it easier to be web presence compliant?

Yes! Libraries that utilize ICfL's [eBranch in a Box](#) service can have a free website that meets all the criteria. eBranch libraries have a website hosted on the lili.org domain. You can still use your own branded URL if you like such as [www.libraryname.org](#), but it's not necessary. The eBranch sites are set up with templates using current website designs and the library need only fill in the blanks with contact information, hours, etc. Recently, eBranch sites got the ability to use WordPress for the content management system. That means that making edits or adding new content is easier than ever for library staff. A library can sign up for eBranch in a Box any time at <http://ebranch.lili.org>.